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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A method for operating a radiotelephone system, the method comprising:

at one or more mobile stations of the radiotelephone system, detecting other mobile stations to which radio propagation conditions are sufficiently good;

at the one or more mobile stations, communicating information about the detected mobile stations to a base station of the radiotelephone system;

at a first mobile station, after detecting other mobile stations and after communicating information about the detected mobile stations, requesting communication with a second mobile station; and

at the base station, if the radio propagation conditions between the first mobile station and the second mobile station are sufficiently good, instructing the first mobile station and the second mobile station to establish direct communication.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising:

at the base station, receiving the communication request from the first mobile station; and

from the information about the detected ~~mobiles~~ mobile stations from the first mobile station and the second mobile station, determining if the first mobile station and the second mobile station may initiate direct communication.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 4 further comprising:

determining if each of the first mobile station and the second mobile station is a detected mobile of the other mobile station.

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8. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 further comprising:  
at the base station, determining a location of the first mobile station;  
determining a location of the second mobile station; and  
determining information about relative proximity of the first mobile station and  
the second mobile station based on the location of the first mobile station and the location of the  
second mobile station.
9. (previously presented) The method of claim 5 wherein instructing the first mobile  
station and the second mobile station to establish direct communication comprises:  
initiating a first communication link between the base station and the first mobile  
station;  
communicating a direct communication instruction to the first mobile station;  
initiating a second communication link between the base station and the second  
mobile station;  
communicating a direct communication instruction to the second mobile station;  
terminating the first communication link and the second communication link.
10. (previously presented) The method of claim 5 wherein detecting other mobile  
stations comprises:  
detecting respective uplink transmissions from respective mobile stations to base  
stations of the radiotelephone system.
11. (currently amended) The method of claim 10 ~~further comprising~~ wherein  
detecting other mobile stations further comprises:  
determining a received signal strength for a detected uplink transmission from a  
~~detected~~ mobile station;  
if the received signal strength exceeds a threshold, identifying the ~~detected~~ mobile  
station as a ~~possible relay candidate~~ detected mobile station.

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12. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising:  
at the first mobile station, in response to the instruction to establish direct communication, entering a packet-based connectionless communication mode with the second mobile station.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12 wherein packet-based connectionless communication mode comprises entering an Opportunity Driven Multiple Access relay mode.

14. (currently amended) A method for operating a base station in a radiotelephone system, the method comprising:  
receiving, from respective mobile stations of the radiotelephone system,  
information about relay candidates of the respective mobile stations;  
storing the information in respective relay candidate lists;  
after receiving information about relay candidates and storing the information in  
respective relay candidate lists, receiving a request from a first mobile station to initiate a call with a second mobile station in the radiotelephone system;  
based at least in part on a relay candidate list associated with the first mobile station, determining if the second mobile station is physically close to the first mobile station;  
and  
if so, instructing the first mobile station and the second mobile station to enter a relay mode for direct link communication.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 wherein instructing the first mobile station and the second mobile station to enter a relay mode comprises:  
communicating information about the relay mode a over a first link with the first mobile station;  
communicating information about the relay mode a over a second link with the second mobile station; and

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terminating both the first link and the second link.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 further comprising:  
receiving from respective mobile stations of the radiotelephone system  
information about relay candidates of the respective mobile stations;  
storing the information in respective relay candidate lists; and  
receiving updates from the respective mobile stations for updating the respective  
relay candidate lists.

17. (currently amended) A radiotelephone comprising:  
a radio communication circuit configured for two-way radio communication with  
remote radio devices; and  
means for detecting other radiotelephones to which radio propagation conditions  
are sufficiently good; and  
a controller configured to control the radio communication circuit to establish a  
radio link to a remote base station to convey a request for communication with another  
radiotelephone and to receive over the radio link a direct communication instruction generated  
by the remote base station in dependence on a relay candidate list, and further configured to  
control the radio communication circuit to interrupt the radio link and establish a relay radio link  
with the other radiotelephone in response to the direct communication instruction,  
wherein the radio telephone further comprises:  
a memory configured to store information about the detected radiotelephones in  
the relay candidate list,  
the controller being further configured to control the radio communication circuit  
to establish a radio link to the remote base station to convey the relay candidate list to the remote  
base station.

18. (canceled)

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19. (currently amended) The radiotelephone of claim 18 wherein the controller is further configured to control the radio communication circuit to detect uplink radio transmissions from other radiotelephones and, in response to the detected uplink transmissions, to populate the relay candidate list.